

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are now pending.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 10-149796 ("JP '796") in view of JP 11-288689 ("JP '689"). The Examiner has rejected claims 3-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP '796 in view of JP '689 taken in combination with JP 01-213953 ("JP '953"). Applicants traverse these rejections, at least for the following reasons.

In this regard, Applicants note that all of the pending rejections are based at least in part on JP '689. Applicants are submitting herewith a Verified English Translation of Japanese Patent Application No. 186051/1999, which is the priority document for this case and which has a filing date of June 30, 1999. Since the priority document has an earlier filing date than the publication date (October 19, 1999) of JP '689, Applicants submit that the submission of the enclosed verified translation of the priority document removes JP '689 as a reference and thereby overcomes all of the pending rejections.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that all of the pending rejections have been rendered moot.


CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request reconsideration and the timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution. A favorable action is awaited.

Except for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. § 1.18, the Commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0310. This paragraph is intended to be a **CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME** in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(3).

Respectfully submitted,

MORGAN, LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP



John G. Smith
Registration No. 33,818

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Customer No. 009629
MORGAN, LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP
1111 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004
(202) 739-3000